

Executive Summary/Conclusion

These are difficult times in the policing profession. In Vermont many agencies are disoriented from legislative oversight, conversations about defund the police and demands being placed on agencies to be the final arbitrator in issues that negatively impact social order in communities.

The conversations about criminal justice reform are often void of the voices of police officers who are dealing with the fallout of under resourced social services support made worst by the COVID pandemic. Often times the providing of public safety can be seen or in practice a us versus them dynamic. Trust between the community and the police can be strained. The ability of smaller agencies such as Chester (Vt.) Police Department to remain relevant in the ever-changing environment is difficult. There is a different expectation of police in 2022 then was five years ago.

Scope of Work

It is against that backdrop that Col. James W. Baker (Ret.) dba JW Leadership Consulting was contracted to do assessment of the Chester (Vt.) Police Department. The request was to do an assessment to determine if CPD was practicing current community policing practices. In particular the Town Manager wanted to understand better where there needed to be improvement. The assessment was to include:

- An opportunity for all members of the CPD to be heard.
- That citizens in the community be afforded time to give feedback on their experiences with and expectations of the CPD.
- Identify areas where opportunities exist to raise the profile and the reputation of the CPD.
- Identify needed improvements in the area of "Community Policing."
- Research and provide feedback on the feasibility of forming some type of citizen oversight of the CPD.
- Determine the needs of the community in order to refocus the direction of the CPD (i.e., traffic safety, quality of life issues, etc.).
- Provide recommendations if the CPD is properly staffed and utilized.
- Give an assessment of the morale of the CPD.

The assessment was done in phases and included interviews with the Chief, employees (current/pass), key stakeholders in the community and other first responders., There was focus groups conducted with citizens, business and non-profits, A survey was conducted and relevant data/documents were reviewed. Finally, a ride along was conducted for half of a shift.

Findings

The CPD has played a crucial role in a community that has a reputation of being a safe and welcoming community. The fact that the community has supported the CPD for a long period of time is a testament to their recognition of the significance of a police agency to create social order and safety. The members of the CPD see their role as being part of the community and are anxious to strategize on how to improve the relationship with the community. There has

been slippage in the trust between the CPD and the community. At the core of an effective police agency is legitimacy in the community, without trust there can be no legitimacy.

The Findings of the assessment are:

- The Town of Chester is a safe community with low criminal activity.
- The majority of calls for service are non-criminal in nature.
- Staff of the CPD are qualified, dedicated and professional.
- The Town of Chester provides good equipment that enhances officer safety.
- CPD has working relationships with key stakeholders that could be enhanced.
- There have been improvements in relationships with town first responders (Chester Fire and EMS).
- Prior to the assessment the CPD policies were not current- the policies have been recently brought up to standards.
- The updated policies need to be trained to and put into practice.
- There is an absence of effective communication internally in CPD.
- There is a want for improved communication between the community and CPD.
- For some members of the community there is a lack of trust with the CPD.
- Staff of CPD do not feel supported (psychologically safe) in the workplace.
- There is no strategic approach to training staff.
- Training hours are not allocated in a balanced manner.
- CPD does not embrace the 21st Century model of community policing.
- There is no community policing strategy.
- CPD is generally reactive and not proactive in their approach to public safety.
- There is no current Mission, Vision or Values statement(s).
- Current structure of the CPD is top heavy with rank.
- The detective position is not fully utilized.
- In 2013 the Vermont League of Cities and Towns made recommendations in an assessment of CPD that have not been fully implemented.

Recommendations

There are ten over-arching recommendations:

1. The practices of CPD need to be aligned with the policies of the CPD-policies need to be trained to.
2. CPD needs to build trust in the community by embracing the guidance from ***The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing.***
3. The Town of Chester should explore and develop a Police Community Advisory Board
4. CPD needs to embrace the use of data to move to precision policing model vs. a directed patrol model.
5. Update the Mission, Vision and Values statements and align them with the needs of the community.
6. Create a department training strategy with a designated training coordinator.
7. Open up communication internally and externally.

8. Add a sixth officer to be utilized as a detective.
9. Prepare to go to a different structure for emergency service dispatching
10. Revisit the 2013 Vermont League of Cities and Towns assessment to determine what recommendations are still applicable.

Acknowledgement

I would like to offer my appreciation to the Town of Chester Town Manager, Julie Hance, for providing the opportunity to contribute to the Chester Police Department continued journey to be the best policing organization that it can be. I also want to acknowledge Chief Richard Cloud and the members of the CPD for their assistance in providing materials, participating in interviews, providing ride a long and being willing to rethink their approach to policing. Notwithstanding the findings and recommendations of this report, I found the members of CPD to be professional, dedicated public servants and eager to improve in their profession.

I would also acknowledge the many citizens of Chester who provided feedback both in person and via a survey. The Town of Chester is a thriving and welcoming Vermont community that has a deep history of pride and hospitality.

Finally, I want to thank my two associate consultants who provided expertise in delivering this report. Chief Jeff Whitesell (Ret.) and Mr. Bradley Goodhale, M.S. are valuable members of the JW Leadership Consulting team.

-Col. James W. Baker (Ret.)

JW Leadership Consulting

JW Leadership Consulting is owned and operated by Col. James W. Baker (Ret.) Baker served with the Vermont State Police for over 30 years. He was promoted to the rank of Colonel and appointed to the position of Director of the Vermont State Police on September 1, 2006.

Baker received a B.S. in Criminal Justice Management from Southern Vermont College and is a graduate of the 188th Session of the FBI National Academy at Quantico, Virginia.

Baker has an extensive background in all aspects of law enforcement. He retired from the Vermont State Police on June 30, 2009 to start a consulting practice JW Consulting. Through his consulting he has served as the Interim Director of the Vermont Police Academy, Acting Police Chief in the Town of Manchester, Vt., Interim Chief of Police for City of Rutland, Vt. and project consultant for the FBI National Law Enforcement Data Exchange (N-DEX) program. Baker also served as Executive Support Specialist for the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Initiative within the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance. He has done extensive consulting for the International Association of Chiefs of Police to include staffing studies, executive searches, agency assessments and culture assessments.

Baker was appointed the Chief of Police for the City of Rutland in August 2012. He left the position of Chief of Police in January 2015 to accept a position with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) as the Director of Law Enforcement Operations and Support. He later

served as the Director of Advocacy. In his role at IACP Baker worked on national and international criminal justice issues to include the development of the Institute of Community Police Relations and the Center for Officer Safety and Wellness.

In 2018 Baker was awarded the prestigious Vermont Con Hogan Award for his collaborative and data driven approach to lower crime in Rutland, Vt.

In May 2018 Baker left IACP to devote more time to his consulting practice. His past work includes the project lead of the Arlington (Vt.) Area Renewal Project, leadership coaching, first responder safety and wellness and law enforcement executive searches. Baker recently served from 2020-2021 as the Interim Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Corrections.¹

Introduction

JW Leadership Consulting was commissioned by Town Manager Julie Hance to conduct an assessment of the CPD. TM Hance requested that the assessment include:

- An opportunity for all members of the CPD be provided with an opportunity to be heard
- That citizens in the community be afforded time to give feedback on their experiences with and expectations of the CPD
- Identify areas where opportunities exist to raise the profile and the reputation of the CPD
- Identify needed improvements in the area of “Community Policing”
- Research and provide feedback on the feasibility of forming some type of citizen oversight of the CPD
- Determine the needs of the community in order to refocus the direction of the CPD (i.e., traffic safety, quality of life issues, etc.)
- Provide recommendations if the CPD is properly staffed and utilized
- Give an assessment of the morale of the CPD

The assessment of the CPD was conducted through the lens of the principals of community policing, co-production of public safety and the tenants of the six pillars of 21st Century Policing. This lens was applied against the back drop of how policing is delivered to communities in Vermont. For context of the report here are overviews of the lens used to assess the CPD.

Community policing is a buzz phrase thrown around but often misunderstood. Community policing is more than “public relations” or one off “program”. Community policing is a deep and collaborative *relationship* with the community served that is built on mutual respect and trust. It is not a program; it is a philosophy. The programs applied are steps in building the deep collaborative relationship with the community.

The six pillars of 21st Century Policing are derived from the work of ***The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing***. Although work was done in 2015, it is as relevant today as it was seven years ago. The pillars of **Building Trust and Legitimacy, Policy and Oversight,**

¹ See webpage <https://www.jwleadershipconsulting.com>

Technology and Social Media, Community Policing and Crime Reduction, Training and Education and Officer Wellness and Safety are the building blocks of effective public safety and social order in communities.²

Co-production of public safety expands the focus of traditional community-oriented policing and includes a greater level of community participation and involvement in key policing strategies that affect the community. This is often done via some form of citizen advisory and/or oversight.

The CPD is one of over 18,000 police agencies in America that employ in excess of 800,000 police officers. The fact is a vast number of communities in America are serviced by departments that look very similar in size, scope and operations found in Chester. In fact, just under fifty percent of the agencies in America employ less than ten officers fulltime.³ The greater Chester area there are several police departments that service neighboring communities (Ludlow, Bellows Falls, Springfield and Weathersfield).

This model of policing in America vs how policing is conducted in other parts of the world present real challenges in funding, administrating and developing professional policing services. Chester is no exception to those challenges. This report will address those challenges and look to the future for modeling a more efficient, professional and outcome-based policing model.

It is important to note that the CPD is staffed by professionals who want to serve their constituents. Every member of the CPD was interviewed as well as former members. They are eager to find new methods, practices and concepts to increase the response and professionalism of the CPD. The assessment process has identified areas where the CPD and community can work to create opportunities for co-production of public safety with an opportunity for better outcomes and higher levels of trust.

It is also important to understand that when an outside assessment is done in any organization there are going to be areas where the assessor finds needed improvement. To the members of the community and to the staff at CPD this report should not be seen as targeted, but rather an opportunity moving forward to reset the opportunities the CPD has to be more effective, efficient and operationally sound.

How to Utilize the Report

The assessment of an organization is an exercise in looking for things that need to be improved- as result can come across as being negative and critical. This assessment is no different. The CPD is a functioning policing agency that has a long history of serving the citizens, visitors and those passing through Chester. There are exceptions to this, but in general CPD should be given credit for the role played in keeping the community low in crime and a place that is safe to live, work, visit and partake in all it has to offer. With that as a foundation there are areas that need to be addressed. This report should be utilized as a guide in how CPD needs to strive to be in a 21st Century public safety model. The report lays out the foundational concepts of how to move to a more collaborative community policing model driven by co-producing of public safety.

² Final Report of The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, Washington, D.C. Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

³ U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics Washington, D.C.

Scope/Methodology

The assessment of CPD was done in four phases. During the course of the assessment the team conducted interviews of all members of the CPD as well as several former members.

Phase 1

- Meet with Town Manager to agree on scope, cost and deliverables
- Meet with Chief Cloud to explain process, go over operational/policies/practice and request needed materials
- Meet with CPD staff using a structured interview process to get input on operations policy/practice, understanding of issues, gauge morale/culture and gather suggestions

Phase 2

- Individual interviews of key stake holders identified by Town Manager (dept. heads, school officials, non-profits, etc.)
- Interview other first responder agencies that work with CPD (fire, rescue, other policing agencies, etc.)
- Interview other agencies who work with CPD (DCF, Corrections, State's Attorney etc.)
- Interview key citizens
- Conduct focus groups with key groups (business owners, citizen groups, etc.)
- Create, distribute and tabulate survey- focused on community view of the CPD

Phase 3

- Review policy/procedures
- Probe how data is collected and analyzed
- Measure CPD against 21st Century policing/modeling
- Assess community policing strategy
- Review calls for service, traffic stops, etc.

Phase 4

- Prepare report
- Brief Town Manager/Select Board

Town of Chester Vt.

The Town of Chester is located in the southwestern corner of Windsor County. The reported population is 3,005. The average age is 54 years old and the population is approximately 97% Caucasian. There is a defined senior citizen population in the community. There are reported to be 1793 housing units in the town. The median income in 2020 was \$58,462 versus the Vermont median income of \$63,477. The workforce is made up a combination of self-employed, private industry, government positions and tourist/service trade. There are 135 employers in Chester⁴.

⁴ 2022 U.S.Census

The land mass of the Town covers approximately 55 square miles and has nearly 97 miles of secondary/unpaved roadways. Chester is served by Vermont Routes 103, 11, 10 and 35. The routes are key points of traveling for tourist and visitors in the state, especially at the height of foliage, ski season and summer travel. Although Interstate 91 does not pass through the town, it serves as feeder to the other state highways that cross Chester, infusing into the community significant traffic surges. These traffic surges represent an important public safety pressure point. This type of pass-through traffic requires a local traffic safety/enforcement component in order to prevent harm.

The town also has other significant public safety pressure points/assets that need to be recognized and understood when developing strategic thinking on co-production of public safety. Those assets include but are not limited to active business districts, two designated historical districts (Stone Village and Chester Village), a grade school, a ununified high school, significant public recreation area(s) and public housing.

In order to build effective relationships in a community and to share the responsibility of public safety it is important to understand and recognize what and who you are protecting.

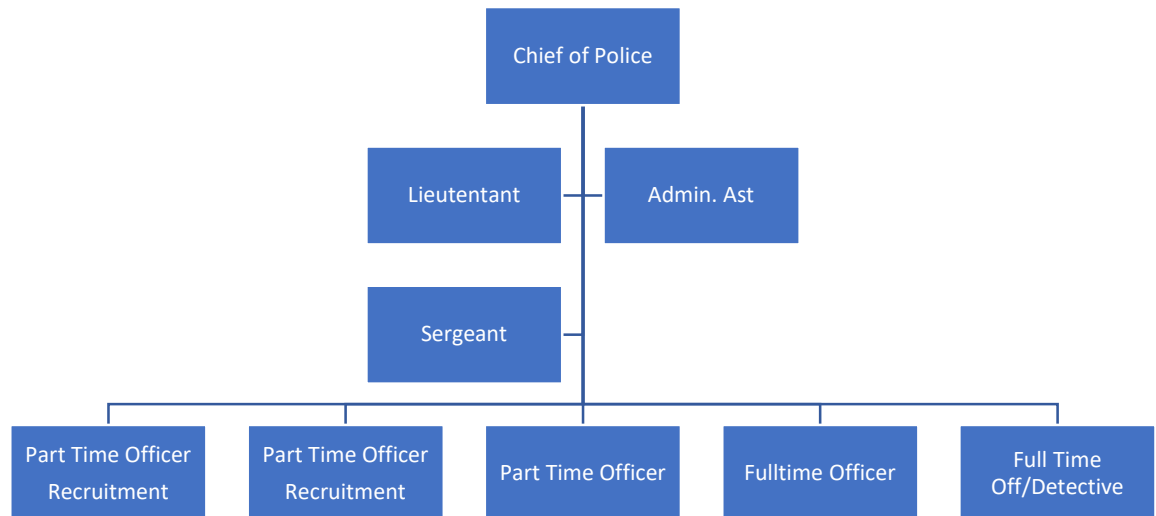
The Town of Chester is governed by a five-person elected select board who hires a town manager to manage the affairs of the town. The police chief answers to the town manager for the purpose of direction, supervision and accountability.

The Chester Police Department

The CPD is comprised of five fulltime police officers and one parttime officer. The CPD recently recruited two more part time officers who will need to be certified by the Vermont Criminal Justice Council. The CPD is dispatched through the Vermont State Police at the Westminster Barracks. The assigned work shifts do not span a twenty-four period, although an officer is always on call. An area of planning that is urgent is the recent decision by the Vermont Department of Public Safety to transition from being local emergency dispatching to regional sites. There is a lot of gray area in this plan that will have a direct impact on the safety and welfare of the citizens of Chester. Although not part of the scope of the assessment, this information emerged as part of the assessment. This should be a priority discussion among the other first responders in Chester to determine the best course of action.

The Chief of Police serves as the executive and focused leader of the department. The remaining officers consist of a Lieutenant, a Sergeant and two fulltime officers and one parttime officer (soon to be three parttime officers). One of the fulltime officers serves as a parttime detective.

The table of organization is outlined here. As can be discerned, the organization is currently top heavy with supervisory roles. This can cause confusion and miscommunication. This should be adjusted and recommendations are addressed later in the report.



President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing

In 2015 in response to several police involved shootings and violence directed at the police, then President Obama formed a task force to look at policing in the 21st century. The task force was made of a cross section of criminal justice practitioners, civil rights lawyer/leaders, community advocates, union representatives and police executives. The task force became known as ***The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing*** (TF)⁵. The goal of the TF was to "strengthen community policing and trust among law enforcement officers and the communities they serve---" ⁶The TF held public hearings across the country and delivered a report that offered serious and balance recommendations on the future of policing in America. The TF report should be used as guiding principle for all police agencies. It should not be dismissed as directed at larger policing agencies. This is a blue print for modern policing strategies.

The overview of the Six Pillars of the TF is listed below. This report should be read in the context of the principles that are the foundation of the TF report.

Trust and Legitimacy

The authority granted to police officers flows from this concept of trust and legitimacy- the authority to police is vested in the powers granted by the community. Procedural justice is the concept behind this pillar. Research has shown that legitimacy is bestowed on those officers who conduct business in procedurally just manner. This approach is built on four guiding principles; a) treating people with dignity and respect, b) allowing individuals to have a "voice", c) being neutral and transparent in decision making and d) having trustworthy motives. It is important to note that procedural justice concepts are important internally as well as externally. Do not expect officers to practice procedural justice when they are not afforded the same treatment internally.

⁵ [Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing | Office of Justice Programs \(ojp.gov\)](#)

⁶ Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing | Office of Justice Programs (ojp.gov)

Policy and Oversight

This pillar emphasizes the importance of the police carrying out their business in a structured manner guided by policies and procedures that reflect the values of the community served. To accomplish this guidance an agency should have clear and comprehensive policies on a variety of issues, such as use of force, bias free policing, appropriate use of equipment, technology, etc. All policies should be publicly available with no barriers for access. It is recommended that agencies embrace peer review of critical incidents, policy and procedures.

Technology and Social Media

The use of technology can enhance police practices and build trust between the community and the police. Technology framework must be governed by community supported policies and be utilized for the purpose of better public safety and transparencies. Social media can be used to better inform the community and provide information in a timely manner. Technology and social media should not be a substitute for personal relationship building that is the cornerstone of effective community policing.

Community Policing and Crime Reduction

This pillar emphasizes the importance of community policing as a foundation for providing safety to communities. Community policing is not a program- it is a deep-rooted philosophy that focuses on working with neighborhood (geographic areas) residents to co-produce a safe community. In order to reduce crime and disorder it requires engaging in multidisciplinary community teams to plan, implement and respond to situations that have complicated social causes.

Training and Education

It is important that police agencies train and develop members for the challenges of 21st century policing. The challenges faced from mental health, addiction, homelessness, new cultural expectations, the ever-changing legal landscape, etc. requires an expanded view of training needs. It is also recommended that agencies call upon community members with given expertise to train/educate members of the department.

Officer Safety & Wellness

The wellness and safety of law enforcement officers is important not just for the officers, but the community as a whole. Working in a safe environment impacts quality of life and retention of officers. Safety includes providing safety equipment (vest, safe cars, proper weapon systems, etc.). It also includes psychological safety as well. An officer who does feel valued and safe will project that on the interaction they have with the community.

In 2022 and beyond, to be effective in delivering safety to communities the guiding document that police should be measured against is ***The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing***. The CPD would be served well by developing a mission statement wrapped around these researched and stated principles. It would be easy to push back on this guidance by expressing it is too complicated, there is no time or this does not apply to small police agencies. The fact is that most of policing in America looks like CPD. More important, it is clear from this assessment, this is what the citizens of Chester are looking for.

Co-Production of Safety

There is new scrutiny and expectations on policing in America and Vermont. Justice reform has become focus of many- at times without well-defined goals. There is frustration in policing that at times spills over into the community. This operating environment requires a renewed focus on why CPD exist and who it serves. The process of coproducing safety in communities is rather new terminology, but under it is a concept that has been a principal in safety for a long period of time. At the core of co-producing safety is the understanding that the police are a community owned resource.

Co-production expands the focus of traditional community-oriented policing and includes a greater level of community participation and involvement in key policing strategies that affect the community. The key distinction is that community-oriented policing is informative, interactive, allows for community input, and is often collaborative with regard to problem solving. Co-production of public safety involves a greater level of influence and involvement by the community regarding the overarching policing strategies and priorities that ultimately affect those being served by the police agency.⁷

Training

The last three years of training records were reviewed to include the Affidavit(s) of Rule 13 Compliance⁸ sworn to by Chief Cloud. In Vermont there is a requirement of 30 hours of in-service training to remain certified as a police officer, to include mandatory training each year (firearms, first aid, fair and impartial policing domestic violence, etc.). In interviews with the members of the CPD the issue of training was probed and realistic feedback was received.

The training process is one of the more challenging aspects in a small agency. Properly utilizing training to achieve the mission of the department is difficult because of limited staffing, limited resources and scheduling. It is challenging just to meet set training requirements. In order to develop officers in key skill sets that will encourage them to professionally grow, and at the same time fashion the training to impact overall mission of the CPD it is important to create a strategy for training.

There were several observations made from the review of training and feedback from staff. First there is no strategy for how training is used to develop staff and meet the mission of CPD. It should be noted that it is hard to fashion training to meet the mission of the CPD when there is no stated mission or vision statement. That should be priority in the very near future.

It would appear and it was the theme among staff that the goal was to meet the basic standard for training, with some deviation such as the identified detective receiving specialized interview/interrogation training in order to deal with juvenile sexual assault investigations and being certified as a death investigator. In fact, most of the remaining staff, excluding the Chief, got training that met minimum or slightly exceeded training requirement.

There was a serious imbalance in training hours among staff that was observed- in the three years of review Chief Cloud every year received more than 100 hours of training each year- to

⁷ [Community Policing in America | Police Reform | BerryDunn](#)

⁸ Required by the State of Vermont Criminal Justice Council vcjc.vermont.gov/council/rules#12

include 170 hours in one year. With the exception of one year (when the detective attended needed certification for job functions) no one came close to getting that type of opportunity. The majority of the Chief's training revolved around his role as a K-9 handler. The issue is not just the allocation of training hours but also the amount of time the Chief is away from his primary duties as the leader of CPD. This has brought a lot of negative consequences not just in morale in the CPD but his availability to citizens and emerging issues.

There is little training to key policies such as use of force, high speed chases, etc. The high-risk low frequency policy applications are critical to train to in order to limit the towns exposure to liability. The CPD does make good use of the on- line options made available by the Vermont League and Towns (VLCT). That effort should continue.

The CPD under the leadership of the Chief should develop a yearly training strategy that focus on policy, the stated mission, officer development and emerging issues locally and regionally.

Policy Review

Policy development and maintenance is extremely challenging in a small police department. VLTC has created a support process that has helped in the area of policy. VLTC has provided model policy to all their member towns/cities that have police departments. These policies are reviewed both from an operational and a legal view point. This is done regularly to stay current with best practices and legal updates. CPD has taken advantage of this service and has adopted the model policies.

The scope of this review did not allow for a complete reading of all the policies. The policy review was focused on the 10-12 policies that present the greatest exposure for the Town of Chester. It would be suggested that those 10-12 policies that present the highest risk be highlighted in some fashion in the manual. In some agencies those policies are grouped together, the pages colored coded and moved to the front of the manual.

There were issues with the manner in which the policies were originally adopted. After reviewing the policies provided it appeared that the model policies were taken verbatim by the CPD. The policies provided were not germane to the size, scope and structure of the CPD or the community served. In an interview with Chief Cloud, he confirmed that the policies were all adopted as were provided by VLCT. The manner in which the policies were presented were confusing and contained policies not germane to CPD. The Chief has now corrected and updated most, if not all of the policies to fit the scope of CPD. The challenge now is to apply the policies to practice, to include the reporting requirements outlined in several policies.⁹

The Internal Affairs/Citizens Complaints policy is an example of policy not aligned with other information available to the public on how complaints are handled. In order for the CPD to have the trust of the community and the members of the CPD it is critical that there is a clear understanding of how the policy is put into practice. During staff interviews, no employee could describe the process that is followed if a complaint is made against them.

⁹ There are policies that have reporting/documentation requirements. Examples are Audit and Inspections, Pursuit Policy and Property and Evidence

The profession of policing is one of the most scrutinized professions with potentially serious consequences. It is critical for the procedural justice and fair treatment of the employees that the employees understand the process if they are accused of misconduct. That does not exist and is a factor in low morale- it is especially raw after the recent Human Rights Commission findings. For citizens in the community the confusion breaks down trust. It sends a message that making a complaint is fruitless- in fact in focus group sessions and interviews of citizens it was clear that for some there is no trust in the current system of bringing grievances forward. The policy adopted is compliant with the model policy required by the State of Vermont Act 56.¹⁰ The policy is in conflict with what is posted on the Town webpage as pertains to the process starting with how a complaint can be made (i.e., no reference to Town Manager role, anonymous complaints, etc.).

A policy manual is a work in progress and should be considered a living document. Policies, procedures, best practices, case law, legislative changes, community needs, and expectations are constantly changing. The best practice in managing employees and meeting community expectations is to review the policy manual at least annually. In addition, as these best practices change and new laws become effective, it is important that the Chief review the current policy at the time the changes occur and ensure that those changes are reflected in the policy. The Chief needs to be sure that the policy change is received and understood by the entire department. There should be a process to have employees sign for their receipt and understanding of policy. It would appear that this has not always been the norm at CPD.

Since the start of the assessment the Chief has made great strides in updating the policies- the challenge now is putting the policies into practice.

Summary of Staff Interviews

Every member of the department was interviewed, as well several members who have left the CPD. The interviews were conducted by using a consistent set of questions. The questions were designed to probe the satisfaction of the staff, as well if there was a sense of safety in the work place (culture of Safety). Those interviewed were found to be cooperative, candid and professional. The morale in CPD could be described as decent, although there are undercurrents and themes that are emerging that are affecting the satisfaction of some of the staff. The morale is affected by the backdrop of the national debate about policing, the challenges presented by COVID, the scrutiny of policing in Vermont and the recent Human Rights Commission investigation. This has left the staff having loss a sense of security (safety). As result of a sense of lack of protection the members recently voted to unionize. The unionization of the workplace brings another level of complexity to the role of the town and the leadership of the CPD.

In general, the members of the CPD are content with the working conditions at the CPD. The quality of the equipment to include the providing of uniforms, protective gear and the quality of the fleet were all areas that the members felt were good. The completion of a new workspace in the Public Safety Building was seen as creating a pleasant work environment.

¹⁰ Act 56 vcjc.vermont.gov/professional-regulation

There were themes that developed that are important to note, because if left unaddressed could cause significant problems moving forward.

There is clearly a lack of direction, stated mission and strategic thinking. The staff shared that there is a lack of communication in the department. This was noted in the review of training records. The numbers of hours that the Chief is in training for K-9 handling in some years accounted for almost full month away from the department. The impression is that officers come to work patrol and take complaints with little to no direction. There is not a clear sense of a chain of authority with little direct supervision applied. The outcome of that approach was seen in the focus groups with citizens, the surveys and the interview of key stake holders (more information in the Community Relations section). This culture also feeds into what staff described as a lack luster communication-although the communication process has improved. The staff is looking for more department meetings where the staff can stay updated on training, emerging and contemporary issues.

An area of concern is how staffing and scheduling are done. For the majority of the staff, it is seen as not fair and is not compatible with work-life balance. An agency the size of CPD assumes that the Chief is a “working” Chief who will fill in shifts with a balance towards providing time for administrative task. As described by most staff they have work around the schedule of the Chief. This is an issue that is affecting morale and if not addressed will drag morale down.

As stated, prior, one of the factors that looms in the background is the recent release of the Human Rights Committee report that found reasonable grounds that the Town of Chester through the CPD discriminated against an individual based on his color and race. The scope of this assessment was not to rehash that report or the Town’s response to the report. But from the assessment there is issue that is negatively affecting members of the CPD. It surfaced in a second case involving an internal investigation as well. The issue is that when asked in the interview if members of the CPD understood the process if an allegation of misconduct was made against them, to a person they have no idea of the process. This is a significant issue and demonstrates the lack of strategy, policy and communication. In order for employees to feel safe, especially in the policing profession with the additional scrutiny applied, it is only fair that they understand the processes that hold them accountable. That is not the case in CPD. This adds to mistrust that could cause more turnover at CPD. This must be addressed.

Calls for Service

Chester is a safe community, in part driven by the commitment by the town over years of supporting a police department. The CPD has a long history of community-oriented service. Nationally, Chester is approximately 70% below the national average in crime reported (based on per 100,000) In Vermont Chester is seen as a safe community in comparison to surrounding communities.¹¹ There is caution in using crime statistics for small communities such as Chester

¹¹ [https://www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Chester-](https://www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Chester-Vermont.html#:~:text=Crime%20rate%20in%20Chester%2C%20VT,crime%20and%20increasin,g%20property%20crime)

[Vermont.html#:~:text=Crime%20rate%20in%20Chester%2C%20VT,crime%20and%20increasin,g%20property%20crime](https://www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Chester-Vermont.html#:~:text=Crime%20rate%20in%20Chester%2C%20VT,crime%20and%20increasin,g%20property%20crime).

who have small number of serious crimes. Insignificant changes in reported crime event can cause drastic percentage changes. It is more relevant to focus on calls for service (CFS) and how the community is serviced when calling CPD.

Three years of CFS were reviewed and analyzed. The analysis showed that a small portion of the CFS were criminal in nature. This is not abnormal and should not be seen as justification to limiting public safety services/commitment. In small agencies the role of the police is more expansive than investigating crime. This is where the importance of a robust community policing/co-production of safety model becomes important. The local police department must serve as the focal leader and facilitator in dealing with social disorder issues that do not rise to the level of serious crime.

In a ride along it was learned of an example of social disorder occurring that caused the quality of life in a neighborhood to be adversely impacted. In one rural section of town a private property owner has allowed individuals to stay on their property as a quasi-boarding house. There is also a quasi-junk yard being operated on the property. This has caused concerns and open conflict with neighbors. The CPD took the lead to collaborate with other agencies (health officer, zoning, fire, etc.) to address the issue. The result of that collaboration in further conflict that could have become disorderly and/or violent was prevented. This is community policing, working with residents and other stakeholders to address quality of life issues that preserve safety in the community. The application of a community policing model can come under criticism as we see across the country calling for more robust intervention by such services as mental health, social services, etc. lowering the need for police intervention. In small communities such as Chester those services are not available to take the lead, leaving the response to CPD.

The chart(s) below breaks down the CFS into general categories to demonstrate how the CFD responds to request for service¹². These calls for service represent the safety of the community when it comes to being exposed to victimization from crime. The response to crime is consistently under 10% for the past three years. The vast majority of the calls for service were non-criminal and focused on quality-of-life issues. In those non-criminal calls are such responses as motor vehicle complaints (accidents/speeding cars), burglary alarms, citizen assists, suspicious activity, animal problems, etc. These are the type of calls for service that go directly to quality- of- life issues in a community and maintain the type of social order that is crime preventing and safety oriented. This is at the core of effective community policing- addressing underlying issues before the issue escalates. This type of public safety services serves a community well.

There is a trend developing in the data that is important to point out and will require further understanding. The percentage of directed patrols have increased. On the surface this is a good thing. The directed patrols have steadily increased over three years: 42 in 2019, 100 in 2020 and 225 in 2022. The increase more than likely due to feedback from the community about activity in the community. The fact that the community reports the activity is a positive sign.

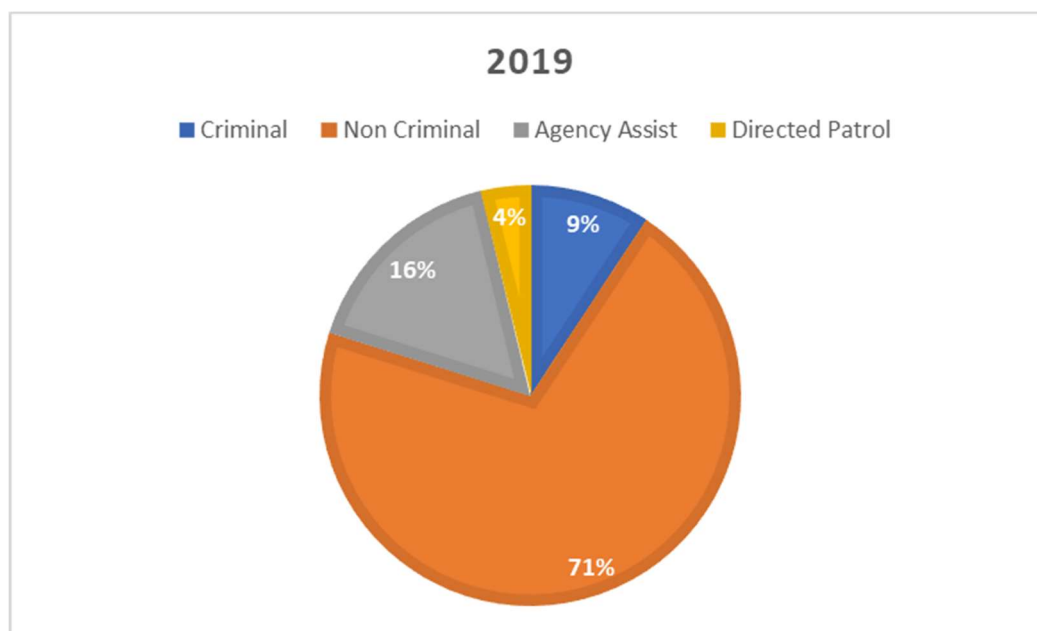
Based on that community feedback officers will take a case number to go to the area identified and conduct a directed patrol. The concept of directed patrol has been the practice of many

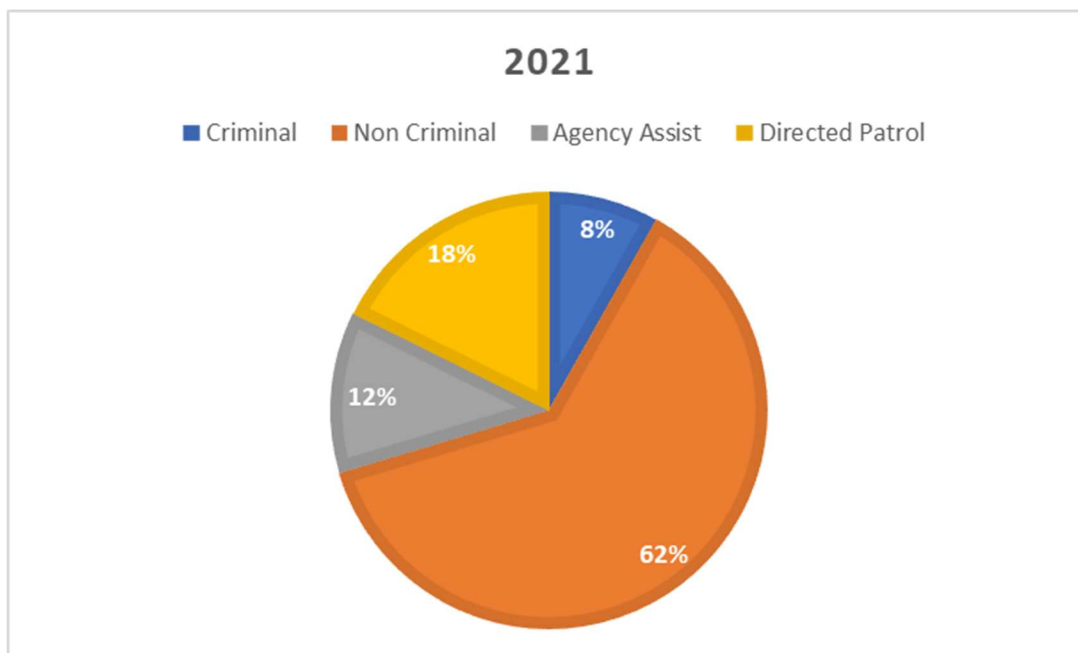
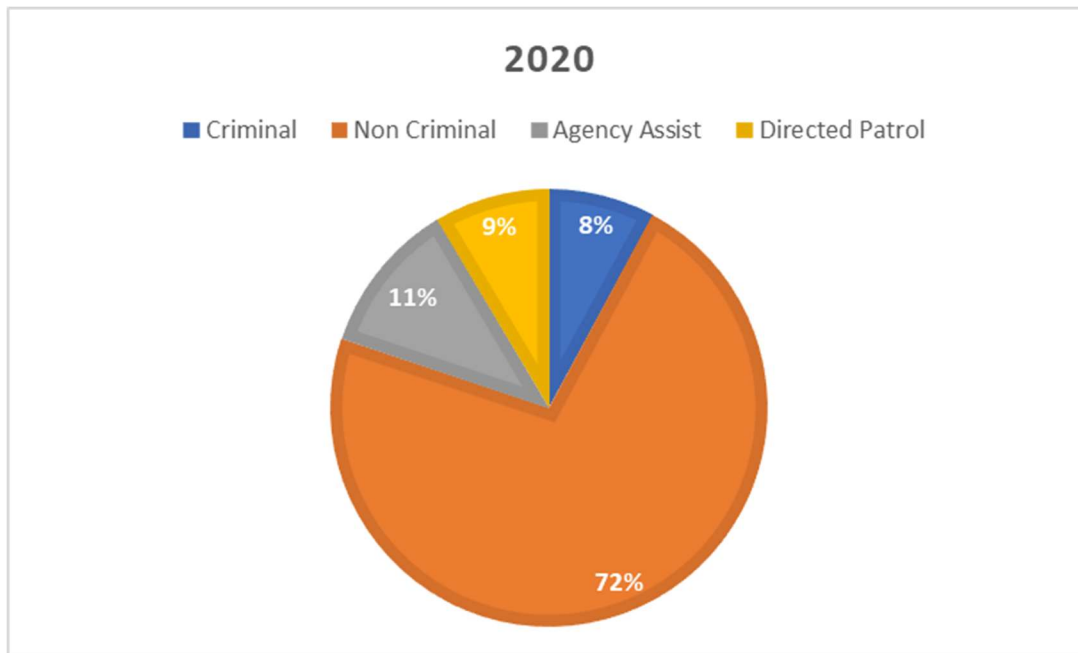
¹² Information taken from annual report of CPD

agencies for a long time. The problem is that directed patrols are not effective unless driven by the use of data. The use of data to drive directed patrols has developed into the concept of precision policing. As an example, the use of data from speed monitoring signs when analyzed will provide patterns of when traffic is heavy and vehicles are speeding, thus giving times and locations to deploy patrols to deter speeding. Without data directed patrols are deployed hap-hazard. The same is true for reports of such things as suspicious behavior in given geographic areas. Without data it is just a guess when the activity is going on- that is a directed patrol. The use of data to identify trends bring precision to the method of response.

The largest challenge for doing directed patrols in a hap-hazard manner is a set up for mistrust between the CPD and the community. The application of an educated guess to address disorder leads to a high probability of not resolving issues. This leads to a loss of faith in the CPD to address that given issue- trust between the community and police is affected.

The ability to analyze sounds daunting. It is not that hard of a task even in a small department. A simple mapping program with a heat map can address the ability to be more precise and thus more effective.

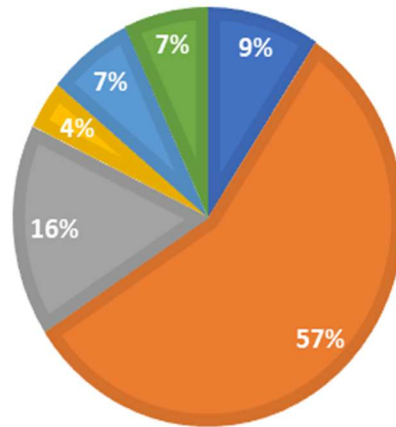




The charts below further break down non-criminal CFS to demonstrate the nature of non-criminal activity, to include motor vehicle accidents and complaints in the Town of Chester. When viewing these CFS it is important to keep in mind the impact of traffic flow in Chester. The traffic accounts require a focus by CPD on the safety impacts that traffic has in a community.

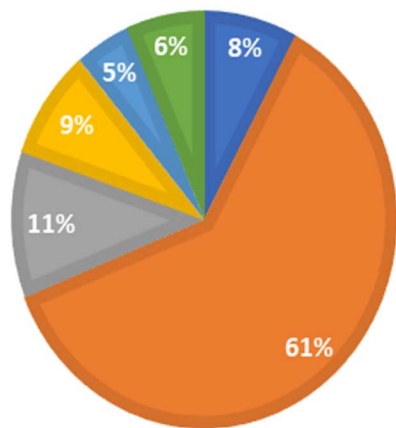
2019

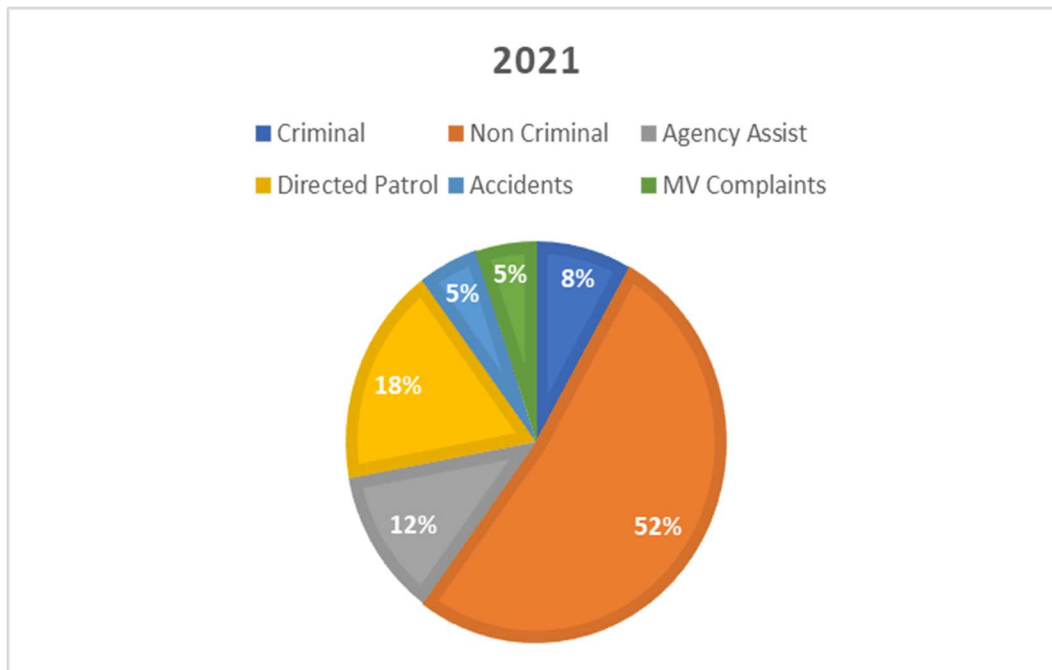
■ Criminal ■ Non Criminal ■ Agency Assist
■ Directed Patrol ■ Accidents ■ MV Complaints



2020

■ Criminal ■ Non Criminal ■ Agency Assist
■ Directed Patrol ■ Accidents ■ MV Complaints





Community Relationships

Several steps were taken to gather information and feedback in regards to CPD relationship with the community. There were individual interviews done with several stake holders to include school officials, first responders, other law enforcement agencies, social service agencies and town officials. There was also a community survey and focus groups were conducted. There were consistent themes developed that can be useful in understanding the needs of the community.

The demographics of the community become important when looking at the relationship with the community. There is, as in most parts of Vermont, an aging portion of the community with the medium age being 54¹³. School officials report that they are observing challenges amongst families to include poverty, addiction issues and related trauma. This is despite the latest census reporting the medium income in the community at \$58,462, suggesting there exist a marginalized portion of the population. It is notable that both the high school and the grade school draw students outside of Chester, but are in the service area during the school day.

The population of Chester declined about 4.7 % in the 2020 census compared to 2010. The population remains majority white with little diversity. Although the population lacks diversity the tourist trade and the heavy traffic on state routes passing through town will bring the CPD into contact with more diversified individuals. The latest traffic counts on Rt. 103 from VT Agency of Transportation showed an average of 9,000 cars a day and on Rt. 11 5200 cars a day- bring a new challenge when it comes to relationships and safety in Chester.¹⁴

¹³ 2020 U.S. Census

¹⁴ Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans)

The reports from school officials are that the CPD and schools have a good relationship when it comes to planning and response for services. There has been a history of the CPD being present in the high school to include interacting with students. The same was reported at the grade school. There is a desire for more interaction with the CPD. There was some frustration voiced over visibility in and around the grade school (to be addressed in community policing).

The interviews of first responder partners revealed a marked improvement in interaction and planning amongst first responders. All reported that the weekly meetings with the Town Manager have increased communication and coordination of emergency services. For those partners outside of Chester it was reported that the cooperation and relationships with CPD were positive. This type of relationship goes a long way in creating a safe environment for residences, visitors and those passing through the community.

In the interviews and focus groups there was troubling themes that developed. Individuals reported a lack of responsiveness from members of the CPD to include the Chief. It was reported there was a failure to follow up on complaints, phone calls and other matters. There were questions about how the CPD is held accountable. For some interviewed there was a lack of trust in the CPD. There were reports that in a five-member department many of the residence do not know the officers. There is a lack of presence by the CPD in key infrastructure areas such as the "Green". There is little information or communication that comes from the CPD leaving a void for social media participants to shape the narrative. When it pertained to neighborhood problems and speeding there is a perceived lack of responsiveness from the CPD. Business owners and non- profits saw a lack of forming relationships and partnerships to address the underlying issues that contribute to social disorder in the community.

Survey Results¹⁵

Although the response of in person/interviews came from small numbers representing the community, survey data added context to the focus group exchange. The survey data would indicate a lack of a deep relationships between the community and the CPD, which is the hall mark of community policing by co-production of public safety. As an example, when asked if the CPD had gotten together with neighbors to address problems in the community 90% of respondents said no. This presents an opportunity to create a strategic and thoughtful process to embed a community policing/co-production of public safety philosophy in the CPD.

There was an overall satisfaction with the interactions with the CPD, although there is a minority who feel like they are not treated fairly. This should be seen as an opportunity to identify that marginalized community to determine if response/treatment is fair and balanced. There are also some indications that there may be disparate treatment based on gender identification, race, etc. This came from a very small portion of the respondents, but should not be ignored and may require more training and awareness.

There was other critical information gained from the survey. There is a demand to keep focused on and deal with quality-of-life issues. Throughout the survey respondents indicated the need to address nuisance and quality of life issues such as speeding and neighborhood disturbance type situations. These are the type of situations that denigrate quality of life but will not show up

¹⁵ The survey results are a separate document which has been provided to the Town Manager

in criminal data. These situations present opportunities to build the type of deep relationships that have been referenced in this report. There is also a want for more communication and interaction with the members of CPD. There were also clear opportunities to embrace the concepts identified as part of the 21st Century policing model described in this report. When asked what the focus of CPD should be over 50% of respondents listed modern policing, communications, procedural justice and community-oriented policing. These points are noteworthy and attention should be given addressing them.

It is important that the tone of the focus groups and the survey does not paint a picture of complete lack of community trust. The CPD has relationships in the community that are effective in silos (schools, first responders, etc.). There is a small portion of the community that believes strongly that there is a lack of communication, trust and community involvement. More needs to be done. The survey results lend support to the recommendation of a more community-based delivery of safety in Chester. There is opportunity to move a 21st Century model that will keep Chester a safe and engaging community.

Community Policing/Co-Production of Public Safety

The CPD has no strategic plan that focuses on a community policing philosophy. Community policing by definition is not visiting schools, engaging citizens, walking a beat (although pieces of the process)- “it is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem- solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety such as crime, social disorder and fear of crime.”¹⁶ By definition this is a co-production of safety between the community and the public safety agency.

Even though Chester is a safe community there is amongst some members of the community concerns about social disorder and concerns about traffic safety. The only way to build a true community policing philosophy is to build trust and legitimacy. That requires a deep and meaningful relationships in the community. Community policing is not about building programs (coffee with a cop, etc.) it is about building a community relationship(s).

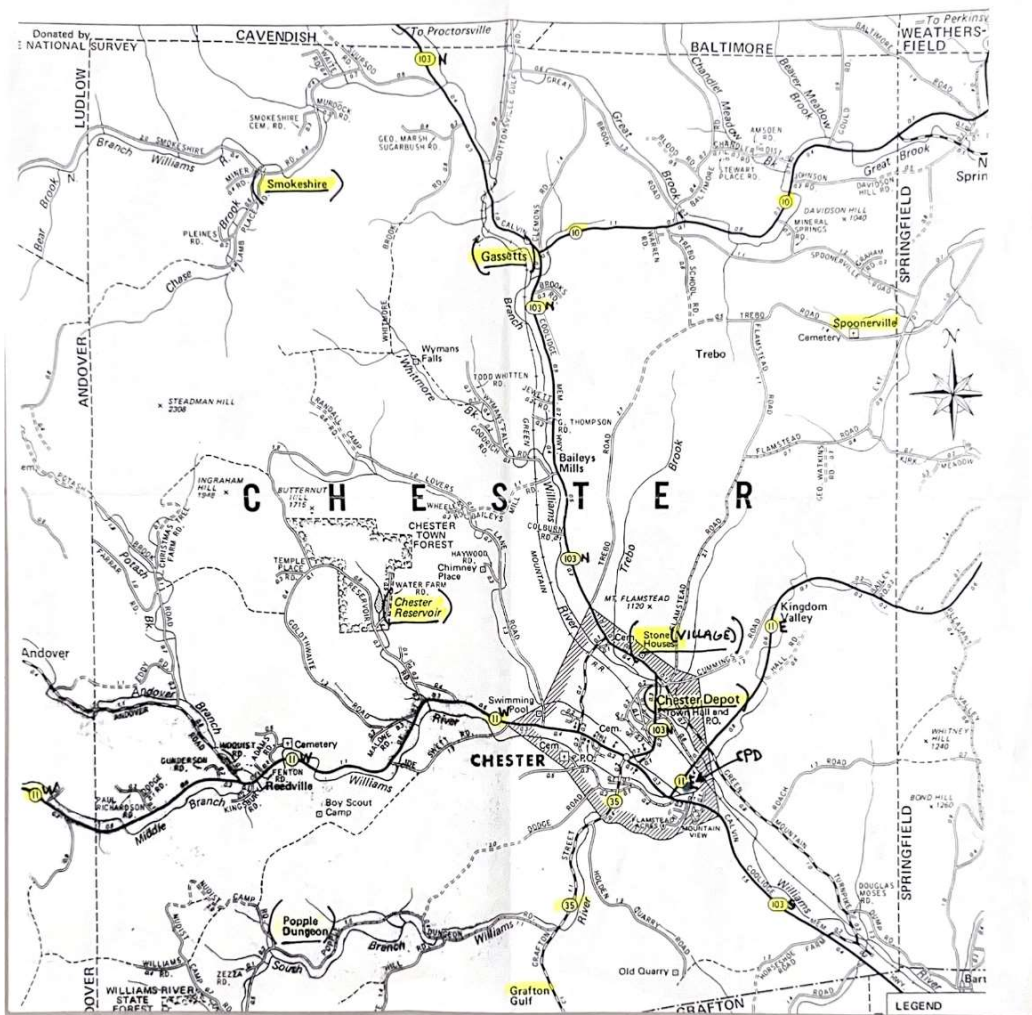
CPD has over the past several months formed working relationships with the other first responders in the community that has led to such things as public safety night, community breakfast, etc. These are good opportunities to build the needed relationships. It is an opportunity for the community to get to know the members of the CPD that will lead to better relationships to solve problems. These outreach efforts need to grow and be enhanced to listening sessions for community members to speak to their concerns. Those concerns should not be dismissed as chronic complainers or “frequent fliers”. At the core of procedural justice is to allow citizens to have a voice.

In order for the community to have trust there needs to be accountability in the CPD. There were stories shared about the failure of the members of CPD to follow up on complaints- to include not returning phone calls. It is important to note in an effort to build trust and legitimacy-

¹⁶ Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing | Office of Justice Programs (ojp.gov)

it only has to happen once that a phone call is not returned for that to be the story in the community.

In locations where there are deep and meaningful relationships in the community it is accomplished by assigning geographic areas to officers (large location teams of officers) for the purposes of solving underlying issues and conditions that lead to crime, unsafe conditions and disorder. It also brings accountability by requiring the officer assigned to be accountable for problem solving in a co-producing manner with citizen affected. This builds relationships, identifies underlying issues and brings accountability for resolving issues. The Town of Chester, as demonstrated by the town map below is divided into geographic areas that are easily assigned to a member of the CPD. As an example, one officer could be assigned to the Depot and Stone Village as the community officer. This concept does not mean that one officer would deal with all the CFS in the area, but rather track the activity and work with citizens to come up with solutions. This would be done by neighborhood listening sessions, data collection and strategy building. For citizens in the community this provides a consistent contact inside the CPD and eliminates confusion for who is responsible for ongoing issues. In an effort to build on the concept of geographic assignments the creation of a community advisory board creates the opportunity to develop further co-producing efforts.



Police Advisory Board

There has been discussion in Chester about “oversight” of the CPD. There has been vocal support from a small group about some type of citizen oversight. This concept should not be dismissed because there may be a small minority calling for citizen involvement in the CPD. At the core, policing is about serving the community. The father of modern policing, Sir Robert Peel, once said “the police are the public and the public are the police.”¹⁷

If it is accepted that in order to have effective co-production of public safety with the community there needs to be a deep-rooted relationship with the community, then acceptance of some form of formalized citizen involvement in the CPD is a logical step. Based on focus group discussions and surveys there is a disconnect at some levels between the community and CPD. In order to build the legitimacy needed to be effective more involvement by the community is necessary.

Chester is not the only community in Vermont considering/talking about citizen involvement in their police department. For some communities police commissions have been in existence for a number of years (Rutland and Burlington). A commission is a charter driven oversight that has direct oversight of the department. In the past the Vermont State Police had advisory boards that were barracks based and offer station commanders insight into community’s needs. State Police have oversight through the State Police Advisory Commission (SPAC) who owns the internal affairs process.¹⁸ In Vergennes there was a report generated that focused on oversight of the Vergennes Police Department. In Bennington, after a well thought out process the community settled on the Community Policing Advisory Review Board¹⁹.

The concept of oversight and advisory has many different forms across the country. In Blacksburg, VA. The Blacksburg Police Department Citizen Advisory Board was established in 2020 to “provide advice and counsel” to residences and students at Virginia Tech.²⁰ As in most advisory models the Blacksburg board does not serve as a review or disciplinary role. Rather this type of model serves as co-producer of safety by participating in giving feedback on such things as policy, equipment purchases, strategy development, training, collaboration in the community, review of crime data and works to create learning opportunities around diversity, equity and inclusion.

It is recommended that Chester begin the process of researching and developing a citizen advisory model to enhance community relationships and community policing/co- producing of safety. It would be wise for CPD to be in front on this issue. Further guidance can be found in a recent article in *Police Chief Magazine* entitled Citizen Advisory Boards in Contemporary Practice: A Practical Approach in Policing.²¹

¹⁷ Sir Robert Peel known as the father of modern British policing

¹⁸ [State Police Advisory Commission | Department of Public Safety \(vermont.gov\)](https://www.vermont.gov/public-safety/state-police-advisory-commission)

¹⁹ [Community Policing Advisory Review Board \(benningtonvt.org\)](https://www.benningtonvt.org/community-policing-advisory-review-board)

²⁰ [Police Advisory Board | Blacksburg, VA](https://www.blacksburgva.gov/police-advisory-board)

[Citizen Advisory Boards in Contemporary Practice: A Practical Approach in Policing - Police Chief Magazine](https://www.policemagazine.com/citizen-advisory-boards-in-contemporary-practice-a-practical-approach-in-policing/)²¹

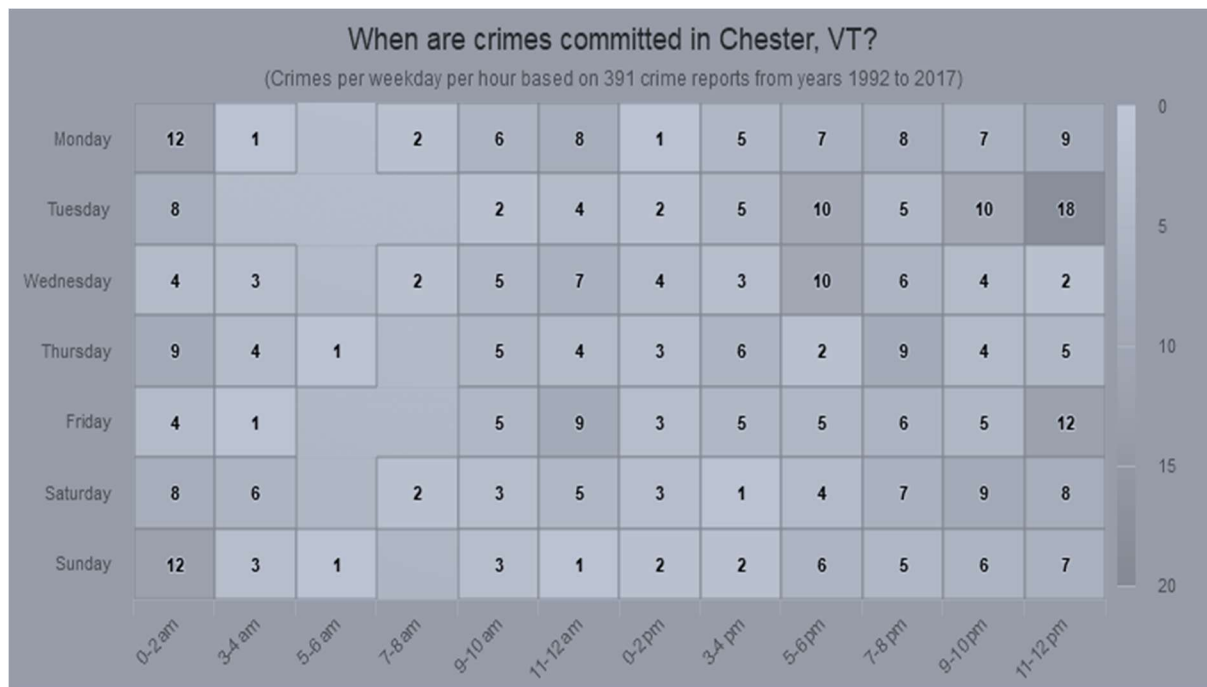
Scheduling

In staff interview there was a great deal of feedback about the instability of scheduling to include regular changes in the number of hours worked in a day. In one case a staff member left the department because of this practice. The stress levels in the policing professional are running high, anything that can be done to create a stable work environment is critical. In small agencies scheduling to get to as close as possible for 24- hour coverage is always challenging. In CPD staff felt like the schedule was unpredictable and had to be built around the Chief's schedule. It cannot be overstated that CPD requires a working chief that is part of a schedule coverage, with times blocked for administrative duties and outreach. In conversation, observation and reading of the schedule it appears that the schedule was built just to get a shift covered and needed to worked around the needs of the Chief.

In recent weeks a new schedule was developed that offered more flexibility in rotating days off and providing "heavy" days of coverage that will enhance the ability to do more community outreach and build the community policing/co-production of public safety model. This schedule should be allowed to work through cycles to determine if it meets the needs of the staff, but as important meets the needs of the community. There is still the issue of the Chief not fitting into the rotation of the schedule, thus taking one of five staff out of rotation.

An important part of managing limited resources is to deploy the human resource when it is most needed with the level of coverage that is appropriate. This requires analysis of calls for service and a review of harmful activity in the community. Below is a "heat" chart that is outdated but useful to illustrate a point.²² This is the type of information that is needed to be effective in deploying resources, even in a small agency. The chart illustrates when crime is committed to include time and day of week. This could easily be a format to map out calls for service. This is another example of why data, even in small agencies, is important to effective operations. It is important that one person be assigned the schedule and a process for scheduling is developed with input from the employees.

²²www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Chester-Vermont.html



Selection of New Chief/Future Staffing

Chief Cloud has announced his retirement effective 12/31/22. The Chief has served the community for nineteen years. As part of a transition plan the TM has hired an experienced policing practitioner to serve as second in command (title of Lieutenant). The departure of the Chief presents an opportunity and a challenge moving forward. As the leadership of Chester begins to ponder the process of replacing the Chief there are considerations that should be considered.

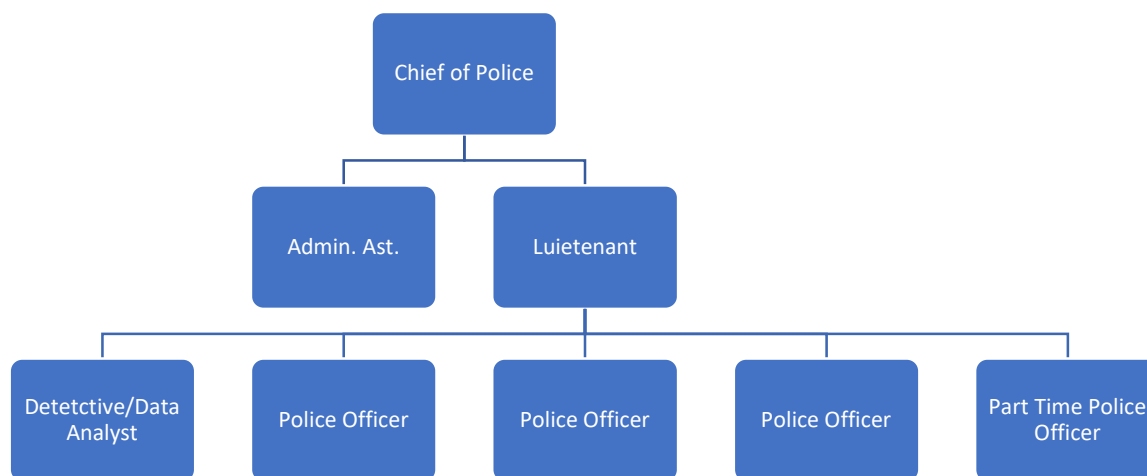
JW Leadership Consulting has worked in several communities in Vermont around challenges faced by police departments. One area that has been a constant theme is the appointment of chiefs with no process applied or a process applied that lacked trust of the agency and the community. There should be consideration given to the process to select the new chief. The process should be based on a profile of traits developed as base line for the next chief. It is hoped that this report sheds light on the traits needed in the 21st century.

During the assessment it was learned that the current chief has operated with no formal contract, this is a bad practice. A contract should be seen as an agreement between the town (citizens) and the chief to deliver services that are outlined in the contract to include compensation, benefits, expectations, availability, etc. A contract forms an understanding that is the foundation of trust between the community and the chief. It is highly recommended that a contract that incorporates an expiration date and a clear method of evaluation be part of the hiring of the next chief.

Once a new chief is identified there needs to be an evaluation of job titles and roles in CPD. The current table of organization shows an imbalance in job titles and the supervisory oversight of staff. This was clear during the assessment. There was confusion over roles and what operational components were supervised by who. To have three members of the CPD with

“rank” and only two patrol offices is not effective. A more reflective supervisory structure would be as demonstrated below. This will also create better accountability within CPD.

It is recommended that a sixth fulltime officer be added in order to serve as a hybrid detective model. This hybrid model would serve several purposes to include a rotating opportunity for officer development, serve as data analyst, coordinate criminal investigations, information with regional agencies and timely flow of information to the community. This would also add more flexibility to cover shifts in uniform. The current Sergeant role should be eliminated and reassigned to an officer. The current Lieutenant rank should be maintained and serve as the second in command in the department.



Regionalization of Services

Although not part of the stated scope of the assessment, the work re-emphasized an issue that is present throughout the state of Vermont. The running of a small police agency is difficult. The requirements are the same and expectations are the same of larger agencies. This report noted a few of the challenges of working chiefs; such as training, policy development and maintenance, etc. In the immediate area of Chester there are several small to medium agencies struggling just like the CPD struggles to maintain training, policy, and other areas of a 21st Century police department. The staffing turnover is significant, often officers bouncing from one agency to another. The ability to attract forward leaning and progressive chiefs is challenging. This begs the question, is there a way to regionalize police services? Would it make more sense if there was one set of policies, one training schedule, one administrator, sharing of human resources, etc.? Frankly, agencies in Vermont do not do a good job of staying current on such things as policy and practices. The ability of purchase power for equipment and stabilization of staffing are good reasons to consider a conversation about regionalization. In the case of

Chester, the town borders three other towns with police departments that have to maintain the administration and leadership of a profession that is complicated and driven by exposure to high liability. The area agencies currently call upon each other for emergency backup, but operate from different policies, procedures and practices- this enhancing the chance of failure in serious situations.

It is the experience of the assessment team that the stated is not the exception- it is the norm in Vermont. It is recommended that a conversation begin about how to regionalize certain aspects of policing. Areas such as regionalized training, collaboration on policy development, mutual aid agreements, equipment purchases, sharing of equipment, sharing of human resources to cover shifts and other sharing opportunities could be a starting point for a better service model.

Study by Vermont League of Cities and Towns

In 2013 the Town of Chester was provided an assessment of the CPD by the VLCT. As part of this assessment that report was reviewed. It is noteworthy that many of the themes outlined in the VLCT report are the same themes that were heard in this current process. In the report there were themes about lack of communication internally and externally, a lack of goals and direction, better management of scheduling and modernize policy and procedures (separating out rules and regulations)- those same themes exist today. In order to have the trust of and in turn legitimacy with the community recommendations in assessments should be priorities. There are reasons why certain groups of citizens feel like they are not being heard. The recommendations in the VLTC report should be revisited and with the current recommendations a plan should be created to implement the collective recommendations.

Recommendations

The assessment team has identified eight over-arching recommendations that should be implemented as soon as possible. Those recommendations are:

1. The practices of CPD need to be aligned with the policies of the CPD-policies need to be trained to.
2. CPD needs to build trust in the community by embracing the guidance of ***The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing.***
3. The Town of Chester should explore and develop a Police Community Advisory Board.
4. CPD needs to embrace the use of data to move to precision policing model vs. a directed patrol model.
5. Update the Mission, Vision and Values statements and align them with the needs of the community.
6. Create a department training strategy with a designated training coordinator.
7. Open up communication internally and externally.
8. Add a sixth officer to be utilized as a detective.
9. Prepare to go to a different structure for emergency service dispatching.
10. Revisit the 2013 Vermont League of Cities and Towns study to determine what recommendations are still applicable.

The recommendations are made with the acknowledgement that under each of the recommendations are components and steps needed to bring those recommendations to implementation. Here are suggested components/steps to implement the recommendations.

Policies

- The current updated policies have been updated and scaled to the needs of CPD- now needs to align policies with practice.
- A review of the policies should be made to identify such requirements such as audits, reporting on policy, etc. needs to be completed
- It is suggested that the Ethics policy be moved to the front of the manual as statement of the expectation of employee conduct and serve as the code of conduct for CPD
- A training strategy should be developed to train to the key policies on a regular basis- focus on low use/high liability policies such as use of force- thus assisting with putting policy into practice.
- The current policy on Internal Affairs/Citizen Complaint should be aligned with public facing information on how to bring a complaint.
- Clarify both internally how complaints are accepted and the process that is followed to investigate and adjudicate complaints- create a flow chart to demonstrate the process.

Staffing/Chain of Command/Scheduling

- Examine scheduling to include adding Chief into rotation and driven by staffing appropriate times determined by data and history of calls for service
- Eliminate the Sergeant position and convert to a patrol officer.
- Maintain the Lieutenant position and designate as the second in command.
- Add a sixth position and designate as the hybrid Detective focused on investigations, case management, data analyst and social media communications.
- Review and update all job description and role definition thus creating clear lines of supervision.
- Create a clear line of communication by updating the table of organization.
- The hiring of a new chief should include a contract that has language which sets clear guidance on availability, job performance and expectations.

Mission/Vision

- A new collaborative mission, vision and value statement should be created by CPD and the community.
- Once developed the mission, vision and value statements should be institutionalized by doing such things as openly displaying them in the police department space, on social media and on business cards of the staff.
- Set goals with benchmarks that are measurable and sustainable.

Training/Staff Development

- Designate a training officer for CPD.
- A comprehensive training strategy/schedule should be developed that focuses on staff development, mission needs, high risk policy and mandatory training.

- Maintain the use of the online training portal for mandatory training.
- Look to regionalize training opportunities.
- Hold quarterly all department meetings and utilize time to train on key policies.

Utilizing Data

- Place an emphasis on accurate data entry on all calls for service.
- Focus on becoming a data driven agency.
- Make better use of data stored in the speed signs in town in order to discern traffic patterns and speeding.
- Move away from hap hazard directed patrols to more precision deployment of patrols based on data.
- Train the designated Detective to be the point of contact for data analyst.

Community Policing/Co-Production of Public Safety

- Create a community policing strategy that is based on co-production of safety with the community.
- Divide the town into geographic section to be assigned to officers for the purpose enhancing relationships and problem solving.
- Hold accountable the geographic assigned officers for working with community members to solve problems that effect safety and quality of life.
- Host no less than two community meetings a year that are designed to update community members and are listening sessions- meetings should be in the community not at the police station.
- Establish foot patrols in key locations in the community.
- Create a Chief of Police walk and talk program to build relationships and legitimacy.
- Develop and implement a Police Community Advisory Board.
- As part of the community policing strategy build relationships with non-profit organizations that assists with underlying social issues that drive disorder.

The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing

- Utilize the TF report as a guide in developing a community policing strategy- starting with building trust and legitimacy in the community.
- In reference to officer safety and wellness- partner with the other first responders in Chester to develop a robust wellness program focused on resiliency building for first responders.
- CPD should participate in the EAP First Responder by embracing and utilizing the Peer Supporter program.
- Attention should be paid to the Pillar on technology and social media to create better communication processes with the community.
- CPD should invest in body cameras to bring further transparency.

